(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) and (b) The fertilizer subsidy is transferred to the farmers in the form of subsidized Maximum Retail Price of fertilizers which is below the normated delivered cost at farm gate level. The fertilizer subsidy is finally released to the fertilizer companies on confirmation of receipt of subsidized fertilizers by the State Governments.

(c) and (d) The Government intends to move towards a nutrient based subsidy regime instead of the current nutrient based pricing regime, in order to ensure balanced application of fertilizers and increase in agricultural productivity, which can consequently lead to better returns to the farmers. However, no final decision has been taken yet.

Check on use of agriculture land for other purpose

2290. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to ensure that fertile land which is used for agriculture purpose in various parts of the country particularly in Haryana and Punjab will not be used for industrial/housing purposes; and

(b) if so, what immediate steps will be taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) As per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, Agriculture, Water and Land fall under the purview of the State Governments and, therefore, it is for the State Governments to bring suitable Act/Legislation to protect the use of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes including housing and industries, etc.

Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture has formulated the National Policy for Farmers, 2007 (NPF-2007) which envisaged Asset Reforms to empower farmers. The purpose of the Asset Reforms is to ensure that every farmer household in villages possess and/or has access to productive asset like land/livestock, fishpond, homestead farm and/or income through an enterprise and/or market-driven skills, so that the household income is increased substantially on a sustainable basis. This, in turn, would ensure nutrition and livelihood security and their education and health requirements. The NPF-2007 has also advised for:—

(i) Considering the skewed ownership of land, it is necessary to strengthen implementation of laws relating to land reforms, with particular reference to tenancy laws, and leasing, distribution of ceiling surplus land and wasteland, providing adequate access to common property and wasteland resources and the consolidation of holdings. Following the conferment of land rights to women under the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005, the provision of appropriate support

services to women farmers has become urgent. Joint pattas for both homestead and agricultural land are essential for empowering women to access credit and other services.

(ii) The Land Acquisition Act has been reviewed with particular reference to the assessment of compensation. It is further stipulated that prime farmland would be conserved for agriculture except under exceptional circumstances, provided that the agencies that are provided with agricultural land for non-agricultural projects should compensate for treatment and full development of equivalent degraded/wastelands elsewhere. For non-agricultural purposes, as far as possible, land with low biological potential for farming would be earmarked and allocated.

Accordingly State Governments have been advised to earmark lands with low biological potential, such as uncultivable land, land affected by salinity, acidity etc. for non-agricultural development activities, industrial and construction activities.

Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development has also formulated a revised National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007 (NRRP, 2007) which was approved by the Cabinet on 11th October, 2007. NRRP, 2007, *inter-alia*, envisages that as far as possible industrial project may be set up on wastelands, degraded land or un-irrigated land and acquisition of agricultural land for non-agricultural uses in such project should be kept to the minimum; and multi cropped land should be avoided to the extent possible.

Jatropha plantation in wasteland

2291. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to discourage jatropha plantation through seeds which can be used to produce environment friendly bio-fuels;

(b) if so, the reasons for such proposal by Government;

(c) whether Government has taken initiatives to cultivate jatropha in wasteland in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (e) The National Oilseeds and Vegetable Oils Development (NOVOD) Board, a statutory body set up in terms of the NOVOD Board Act, 1983 under the Ministry of Agriculture is entrusted with the task of Implementation of Integrated Development of Tree borne Oilseeds, the main components of which are Jatropha and Karanja which are not known to have any harmful impact on the environment. The Board has initiated a programme for creating a model plantation of Jatropha as a seed source and has undertaken R&D Programmes through a National network of 73 institutions for development of high yielding varieties of Jatropha and Karanja in the country. As a